

Water Allocation Policy Planning: Critical Path

-0.1 High level planning

[Water Planning Council]

- Conduct Cost Analysis.
- Be implementable by appropriate regulatory agency.
 - Address issue of who pays hard and soft costs.
- Take into account the costs of not having an allocation policy.
- Recommendations to the Legislature.

- Unattached Items

- Educate public about water use and allocation.
- Educate public about the costs and raise public consciousness about water allocation issues.

0.0 Legislative Authorizations, Policy Decisions and Funding / Support

- Address Grandfathered Diversions.
 - Deal with problems associated with Grandfathering.
 - Provide for current information on existing diversion activity within basins.
 - Address Historic Uses.
 - Reauthorize registered diversions.
 - Periodically review allocations (possibly reviewing registrations and converting them to diversion permits.?).
- Procedures / Policy
 - Be authorized by Statute.
 - Contain a reporting requirement for major water users.
 - Be enforceable.
 - Address existing overallocation problems (provide authorization to).
 - Provide for prioritization of uses. / Give clear priority to certain uses.
- Address the maintenance of Class B prohibitions relative to drinking waters.
- Provide incentives for implementing policy.
- Have high priority in the agency or agencies that regulate.
- Provide clear guidelines for regulators.
- Costs
 - Provide for appropriate funding to implement.
 - Funding for all phases of the process.

1.0 Develop an Inventory (by Basin) - Establish a method for collecting all the baseline data needed for planning and allocating waters of the State [Federal / State agencies]

- Sound Science.
- Existing conditions throughout the year.
- Be adaptable between watersheds.
- Review and assess grandfathered diversions.
- Address Inter-basin transfers (collect data on) and data on the effects of existing regional sharing.
- Includes current demographics and land use to facilitate demand estimation and forecasting.
- Includes data on all consumptive & partially consumptive water diversions and discharges.
- Includes data necessary for development of precipitation, surface and groundwater models.
- Assess conservation levels and potentials for all identified diversions.

3.0 Calculate Low Flow Limits [Federal & State Agencies, Expert Consultants] (Input from Technical Committee)

- Maintain the ecological integrity.
 - Incorporate instream flow standard setting methods.
 - Consider the existing instream community.
 - Recognize practical limits to resource use(s).
 - Address seasonal aspects of resource and of use.
 - Take into account how long flow impacts will last.
 - Address allocation impacts on water quality.
- Support attaining uses, criteria and classifications.
- Address differences within the physical environment.
- Be adaptable between watersheds.
- Be adaptable to regulated and unregulated streams.
- Address differences between streams through variable standards.

4.0 Run Basin Model (see Pawcatuck Study) [USGS, State Agencies, Expert Consultants]

- Sound Science.
- Be flexible to adapt to changing needs.
- Consider flooding effects (pro and con).
- Address Class B waters.
- Make Runs to predict all allocation scenarios.
- Determine quantities that are available for allocating.
- Be based on accurate data.

2.0 Conduct Basin Planning -(Public Input Process) [OPM, Local and Regional Planning Agencies, Federal and State Agencies - WUCC's and Water Supply Plans]

- Provide for Stakeholder Involvement.
- Consider Public Perceptions.
- Allow for local community input into allocation of resource.
- Address regional variability in social and political needs.
- Address (drought?) emergencies.
- Allow for differing priorities in different basins / areas.
- Be flexible to adapt to changing needs.
- Use natural resource and ecologically based water supply planning.
- Encourage regional solutions.
- Be consistent with Plan of C&D.
- Be consistent with over-arching water management & water quality goals.
- Include long-range planning.
- Define a process for resolving conflicts between competing uses.
- Encourage the use of Class B waters for non-potable uses.
- Define and provide for public water supply needs.
- Take into account environmental and public health and safety needs. Look at margin of safety needs.
- Include water conservation (not just during droughts).
- Be single resource based, i.e., include surface and ground waters.

5.0 Make Apportionment Recommendations (Political / Public process resulting in some form of document that allocates the water resources in the basin)

- Create independent 3rd party to oversee the allocation process.
- Be able to be phased in over time.
- Address water resource management /operation.
- Address conservation issues.
- Protect water supply aquifers.
- Define and provide for public water supply needs.
- Take into account environmental and public health and safety needs.
- Look at margin of safety needs.
- Balance natural resource requirements with water supply needs.
- Address existing overallocation problems.

6.0 Conduct Permitting & Judicial Review (reference the document from 5.0)

- Diversion permitting process must be predictable, reliable and efficient.
- Based on Apportionment guidance document.
- Have predictable time frame for actions.

It is anticipated that Basin Planning, Basin Modeling, and Apportionment Recommendations will continue in a cycle until enough planning, science and political will are generated to produce a document which gives the allocations for the basin.